

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927

MR13 Fellahin MR13

Upper Egypt

THE VILLAGES AND THEIR INHABITANTS

A mosque is to be found in every village, and in many places there are three or four such buildings. Five times a day a *mueddin* chants the call to prayer from each mosque—from the minaret if there is one—and the resonant voices of these officiants may be heard far beyond the confines of the village. [182] 346

An old graveyard often stands in the middle of a village, probably indicating the older boundary, the houses built beyond it having been erected later owing to the increasing population (see below, p. 72 and Fig. 32). A whitewashed building, crowned with [764] 361 778



FIG. 10. WARP-THREADS ATTACHED TO PALM-TREES

a dome, stands, perhaps, on the highest point of the burial-ground, indicating the last resting-place of a sheikh, or holy man, or, at any rate, erected in his honour. Candles are usually lighted in the building on "the night of Friday"—i.e., the night preceding the Friday—in commemoration of the sheikh. Such lights are, in most cases, the only illumination out of doors to guide the late wayfarer. These buildings, and there are often several in or around one village, are prominent architectural features, standing up with their whitewashed walls and domes above, and in glaring contrast to, the mud houses and hovels of the peasants. [778] 782 373

* Shops of different kinds are situated in the wider streets or lanes, [000]

THE FELLĀHĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

796 ground facing the house on which a mosque has lately been erected, had especially belonged to them. They were, of course, driven [346] from this spot when the mosque was built, and since the intro- [197] duction of motors and telephones, to which they strongly object, the road also had been made uninhabitable for them. They have therefore taken refuge in the Rest-house garden, where several people claim to have seen them. Three such appearances occurred during my residence.

One night, while my guard was enjoying a peaceful sleep, he



FIG. 134. THE REST-HOUSE AND ITS HAUNTED GARDEN

suddenly awoke in terror and saw towering above him a huge figure in the form of a man, which remained standing thus for a minute or two and then vanished. On another occasion the same guard saw an *'afrit*, in the form of a dog, run round the garden, pass the windows of the Government offices overlooking it, and then vanish. About a week later, as my servant was crossing the garden on his way from the house to the kitchen, carrying a lighted lamp in his hand, the light was suddenly put out, though there was no wind, and presently he saw a shadow run along in the same direction as that taken by the dog. This, he said, when he re-counted to me his adventure, was an *'afrit*.